

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MADRID 08390 211821Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----015100 221406Z /53

R 211814Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5451
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 08390

EXDIS

E.O. 11652- GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PBOR, SS, AG, MO, MR, SP
SUBJECT: SPANISH VIEWS REGARDING MAURITANIA

REF: MADRID 8255

1. AS PER REFTEL, POLITICAL COUNSELOR JULY 21 BRIEFED
PEDRO LOPEZ AGUIRREBENGOA, MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR NEAR
EAST AND AFRICAN AFFAIRS, ON MAURITANIAN DEVELOPMENTS.

2. LOPEZ STATED IN REPLY THAT THE GOS SAW THE MAURI-
TANIAN SITUATION THE SAME WAY WE DID. IS COULD BE,
HE THOUGHT, AN HISTORIC OCCASION SINCE THE POSSIBILITY
NOW EXISTED FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE CRISIS.
BUT IF WE LET THIS MOMENT SLIP BY AND ALLOW HOSTILITIES
TO RESUME AGAIN, THE RESULTS MIGHT BE GRAVE AND A GENERAL
DESTABILIZATION OF THE AREA MIGHT RESULT.

3. LOPEZ AGREED THAT THE OUTLOOK AND COMPOSITION OF THE
NEW MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT WAS ENCOURAGING. A COUP OF
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MADRID 08390 211821Z

SOME SORT HAD BEEN INEVITABLE, HE SAID. BUT IF OTHER
GROUPINGS WITHIN THE MAURITANIAN ARMED FORCES HAD SEIZED
POWER, THE COMPOSITION OF THE GOM MIGHT NOW BE PRO-
MOROCCAN OR PRO-LIBYAN. IN EITHER CASE, THE SITUATION
WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH MORE PRECARIOUS FOR US THAN IT IS AT
PRESENT.

4. THE MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT IS IN A VERY TOUGH SITUATION, LOPEZ SAID. MAURITANIA DESPERATELY NEEDS ECONOMIC SUPPORT TO HELP STAVE OFF BANKRUPTCY AND POLITICAL SUPPORT TO HELP MAINTAIN ITS NATIONAL UNITY. IF THE MAURITANIANS SPLIT WITH THE MOROCCANS THIS WOULD LEAVE RABAT IN A SITUATION WHERE ITS ONLY LONG RANGE ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE TO PLUNGE THE AREA INTO A GENERAL WAR. FURTHERMORE, IF THE MOROCCANS SEIZED THE MAURITANIAN SAHARA THIS COULD CREATE ENORMOUS PRESSURES WITHIN MAURITANIA WHICH MIGHT CAUSE IT TO BREAK APART. IT IS THEREFORE UP TO THE UNITED STATES, TO FRANCE AND TO OTHERS WHO HAVE AN INTEREST IN MAINTAINING STABILITY IN THE AREA TO DO ALL THEY CAN TO PRESERVE MAURITANIA AS A NATIONAL ENTITY AND TO SUPPORT IT IN ITS EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE PEACE, LOPEZ SAID.

5. THERE HAS BEEN NO MOVEMENT ON A POSSIBLE SAHARAN CONFERENCE (MADRID 7931) SINCE OUR LAST CONVERSATION JULY 12, HE CONTINUED. THE GOS IS READY TO HOST SUCH A CONFERENCE, ATTENDED BY UN SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHEIM AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES, OR TO TAKE ANY OTHER ACTION WHICH MIGHT ASSIST IN ACHIEVING A SETTLEMENT PROVIDED THAT SUCH ACTION DOES NOT IMPLY THAT THE SPANISH ARE RESUMING THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE IN THE SAHARA. TALKS BETWEEN THE INTERESTED PARTIES CONTINUE, LOPEZ SAID, BUT AS OF THE PRESENT MOMENT THE ALGERIANS ARE STILL INSIST-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MADRID 08390 211821Z

ING THAT THE POLISARIO BE REPRESENTED AS A SEPARATE ENTITY AND THAT SUCH A CONFERENCE BE SPECIFICALLY TAGGED AS DEALING EXCLUSIVELY WITH THE SAHARA, BOTH OF WHICH ARE OF COURSE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE MOROCCANS.

6. LOPEZ AGUIRREBENGOA VERY MUCH APPRECIATED RECEIVING OUR ASSESSMENT ON MAURITANIA. HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS AREA TO SPAIN AND THE POSSIBLE ROLE WHICH THE SPANISH COULD PLAY IN THE AREA AND REQUESTED PERIODIC UPDATINGS FROM US. WE BELIEVE IT IS IN OUR INTERESTS TO KEEP THE SPANISH INFORMED ON THIS AND, UNLESS THE DEPARTMENT HAS OBJECTIONS, PLAN TO BRIEF HIM ON THE ONGOING SITUATION AS FURTHER SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS OCCUR. TODMAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MADRID08390
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780302-0098
Format: TEL
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780734/aaaabcjw.tel
Line Count: 108
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 03ec146f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 MADRID 8255
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1927885
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SPANISH VIEWS REGARDING MAURITANIA
TAGS: PEPR, PBOR, SS, AG, MO, MR, SP
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/03ec146f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014